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MEMORANDUM

Date: October 30, 2020

To: Wildlife Board and Regional Advisory Council Members

From: Covy Jones, Big Game Coordinator

Subject: 2021 big game proposed season dates, boundary changes, hunt changes, rule change (R657-38) and statewide elk plan amendments.

The attached documents summarize the DWR's recommended changes to the big game guidebook.

Big game season dates:

See attached tables for details.

Big game guidebook recommendations by species:

Deer

1. New hunt:
 - a. North Slope (early), any legal weapon hunt from Oct. 13–17, 2021
2. Discontinued hunts:
 - a. Henry Mtns management buck hunts
 - b. North Slope, Summit limited-entry hunt

Elk

1. We conducted a mid-plan review with the statewide elk committee, and the committee discussed the issues listed below. Changes to the plan recommended by the committee are included in the packet of materials:
 - a. Reviewed unit age objectives
 - b. Looked for options to increase opportunity in our limited-entry hunts (e.g., HAMS hunts and September archery hunts)
 - c. Looked for options to increase opportunity in the general-season any-bull elk hunts
2. New age objectives:
 - a. Book Cliffs, Little Creek
 - i. Currently 7.5-8.0



- ii. Recommended 6.5-7.0
 - b. Cache, Meadowville
 - i. Currently 4.5-5.0
 - ii. Recommended 6.5-7.0
 - c. Central Mountains, Nebo
 - i. Currently 6.5-7.0
 - ii. Recommended 5.5-6.0
- 3. New limited-entry hunts:
 - a. We recommend adding new archery hunts (Sept. 1–30, 2021) and handgun-archery-muzzleloader-shotgun (HAMS) hunts (Oct. 1–Nov. 15, 2021) on these four limited-entry elk units:
 - i. Cache, North
 - ii. Oquirrh-Stansbury, West
 - iii. Plateau, Barney Top/Kaiparowits
 - iv. West Desert, Deep Creek
 - b. Box Elder, Pilot Mtn archery hunt (Aug. 21–Sept. 10, 2021)
- 4. Discontinued current limited-entry hunts:
 - a. We recommend discontinuing the current limited-entry hunts on the following units to allow either a new limited-entry opportunity (described above in 3a) or a new general-season any-bull elk unit (described below in 6a):
 - i. Cache, North
 - ii. Nine Mile, Anthro
 - iii. Oquirrh-Stansbury
 - iv. West Desert, Deep Creek
- 5. Boundary changes:
 - a. We recommend boundary changes to the current limited-entry units to allow either a new limited-entry opportunity (described above in 3a) or a new general-season unit (described below in 6a):
 - i. Plateau, Boulder
 - ii. Southwest Desert, South
 - iii. Box Elder, Grouse Creek
- 6. New general-season elk units:
 - a. We recommend the following units be added to the any-bull elk hunt:
 - i. Box Elder, Sawtooth
 - ii. Nine Mile, Anthro
 - iii. Oquirrh-Stansbury, East
 - iv. Southwest Desert, North
- 7. General-season elk hunts:

- a. After meeting with the elk committee, we recommend modifying the elk management plan to allow an unlimited number of any-bull elk permits, this recommendation is made in an attempt to accomplish the following:
 - i. Expand opportunity for families
 - ii. Strengthen ties to our hunting heritage
 - iii. Provide a challenge — not an easy hunt

Pronghorn

1. New hunts:
 - a. Fillmore, Oak Creek South muzzleloader (Sept. 29–Oct. 7, 2021)
 - b. North Slope, Three Corners/West Daggett muzzleloader (Sept. 29–Oct. 7, 2021)
 - c. Plateau, Highlands
 - i. Archery (Aug. 21–Sept. 17, 2021)
 - ii. Muzzleloader (Sept. 29–Oct. 7, 2021)
 - iii. Any legal weapon (Sept. 18–26, 2021)
2. Discontinued hunts:
 - a. Plateau, Parker Mtn
 - i. Archery (Aug. 21–Sept. 17)
 - ii. Muzzleloader (Sept. 29–Oct. 7)
 - iii. Any legal weapon (Sept. 18–26)

Bison

1. New hunt:
 - a. Book Cliffs, Wild Horse Bench hunter's choice (Aug. 1, 2021–Jan. 31, 2022)
2. Boundary change:
 - a. Nine Mile (over-the-counter bison)
3. Discontinued hunts:
 - a. Book Cliffs, Bitter Creek/South (cow only)
 - b. Henry Mtns (archery, hunter's choice)
 - c. Henry Mtns (archery, cow only)

Desert bighorn sheep

1. Discontinued hunt
 - a. Zion (archery)

Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep

1. New hunt:
 - a. Fillmore, Oak Creek (archery)
2. Discontinued hunt:
 - a. Box Elder, Pilot Mtn

3. Boundary changes:
 - a. North Slope, Three Corners-Bare Top
 - b. North Slope, Summit/West Daggett

Dedicated hunter rule (Utah Admin. Rule R657-38)

1. Proposed change:
 - a. Limit the number of dedicated hunter permits available in the big game drawing to the following:
 - i. 15% of the total annual general-season buck deer quota for each unit
 - ii. A maximum of one resident and one non-resident permit, if the unit's 15% total is met or exceeded

Boundary descriptions for new hunts — and boundary changes for existing hunts — are included in the packet.